Mr. *Williamson's*

MEMOIRS

OF

A few Paſſages tranſacted by

Mr. *Joſeph Allen*,

Late Maſter-Builder at his Majeſty's SHIP-YARD, *DEPTFORD*.

WHEN

Mr. *Williamſon* was employed to Convert the Timber.

LONDON:

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THE PREFACE.

THE *Juſtice of the Obſervations I am engaged in, makes me fear no Judges; and, indeed, were the moſt Judicious and Competent to be choſe, I ſhould think my ſelf ſecure of the Honeſt and True; but ſhall ſubmit the Deciſion to ſuch as are well ſkill'd in the Practical Part of Ship-building. Our excellent Stateſman* Sir William Temple, *who truely deſerved the Name of* Publick Spirit, *for the excellent Writings he hath left behind him, particularly his Survey of the*

Conſtitutions and Intereſts of the Empire, and other Countries, with their Relations to his Majeſty in the Year 1671. *mentioning the Strength of our Shiping, as having for many Ages paſt, and ſtill, for ought we know, made us an Over-match for the ſtrongeſt of our Neighbours at Sea, and ſpeaks of the* Dutch *having been aw'd by the ſtrength of our Oak, and the Art of our Ship-wrights; it is therefore not without reaſon that the Charter of the Corporation of our Ship-wrights, have obliged them not to communicate their Art to any Foreign Prince or State; but yet when it is conſider'd, that the Contracts of the Navy Board for building Ships, did, 'till within Twenty or Thirty Years from the date aforeſaid, oblige the Builders to build with good ſubſtantial* Engliſh Oaken *Timber and Plank, and that ſuch not being to be had, the Word* (Engliſh) *was left out, and Liberty given to build with White crown'd Eaſt Country Plank; and on farther Conſiderations, Application was made to the Miniſters of King* Charles *the Second by the Corporation of Ship-wrights, ſhortly after his Reſtoration, the ſaid Corporation waited*

on

on his Majesty with their Proposals in Writing, for the Preservation and Encrease of Oaken Timber; the Copies of which have been more particularly given under the Hands of Sir Phincas Pett, *and many other of the most Eminent of that Corporation, and that those Proposals being refer'd to the then Attorney General, he refer'd the consideration thereof to the Navy Board. Sir* William Coventry, Mr. Pepys, *Sir* William Batten, *and the rest of the Commissioners of the Navy, did with great Judgment report also in Writing, How and Where a sufficient number of Oaken Trees might be planted in his Majesty's Forrests; and that the judicious Report from the Navy Board carry'd with it self Evidence how practicable the thing was, notwithstanding which that great Proposition evaporated, which had it been vigoriously pursued, had plainly shewn, that the Oaken Timber sufficient for the use of the Royal Navy had now been in a forward way to it's Growth, since it hath been observed that Acorns Sown, have in the space of Thirty Years born a Stem of a Foot Diameter, 'tis then obvious how soon they will bear a Stem of a Foot and a*

half

half Diameter, and that such Timber of a Foot and half Diameter, will be greatly Serviceable in the Building of Ships; and indeed when such rare Instances are justly consider'd, I think there is too much occasion to bewail our Soils not being Fertile with Men of Publick Spirits.

Whether we shall at this rate come to build with English *Oak again before* Plato's *great Year I know not, but in all likelihood, according to the present Custom and Management of our Wooden Manufacturers, in a few Years there will be no* English *Oaken Timber, or Plank, to use, but that we shall be wholly beholden to other Kingdoms for Timber, or otherwise content our selves without having a Navy to defend our Land, or private Ships to Trade and inrich the same.*

It is now near Five and Forty Years since those rare Instances, and most useful Hints were given. It is with pleasure also to be observ'd, with what Celerity the Honourable the then Commissioners of his Majesty's Royal Navy were to mark out some proper Place in the Kingdom to Plant and Nurture up that most excellent

cllent and uſeful Ship Timber; ſince which time our Royal Navy (without being particular in our Merchant Ships for Traffick and Commerce) is augmented very conſiderable, both in Magnitude and Number, for there are Seven and Fifty Sail of Line of Battle Ships added to the Number, and in Magnitude now, a Second Rate is as large as the Firſt, the Third as the Second, and the Fourth Rates full as large as the Third Rate was then; ſo that the quantity of Timber requiſite to be yearly expended in his Majeſty's Royal Navy, is more than three times what it could poſſibly be Fifty Years ago; ſo that the care of its Preſervation conſequently ought to be ſo much the more. I have realy at ſome times been amaz'd to ſee the abominable neglect in the uſe of our Engliſh Oak Timber in the ſaid Yard, which indeed has brought to my Memory, what I have heard tranſacted by the Hollanders in the Eaſt Indies, they having moſt of the Spice Iſlands there, and it is reported, That when they have a great plenty of ſuch Commodities, rather than Spice ſhould be very cheap, they will ſet Fire and conſume the great-

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eſt part, to make the remainder fetch them the better Price; whether this Paſſage can be in the ſtricteſt Senſe applicable to the Traffick and uſe of our Engliſh *Oak, or the Advantage of our noble Propriators, I ſhall leave it to the Reader to determine, but am well aſſured it is very deſtructive to our* Engliſh *Ship-wrights, ſince by the ſcarcity of Timber, Building becomes very dear in* England, *and conſequently a great part of our Shiping is Built beyond Sea, as in* New-England, Virginia *and* Carolina; *the conſequence of which I ſhall alſo leave to others to think of.*

I obſerved a Paſſage once by two Dutch *Skippers as they view'd the ſaid Yard, and the Timber lying very Mountaneons, tho' ſeemingly freſh, ſays one to the other,* Here is a great deal of good Timber; *the other reply'd, Good for neem an daul,* If the States of *Holland* had ſuch a quantity of Goods laid ſo, they would up Hang ſome for doing it; *and really, in my Opinion, ſuch a Practice deſerves little leſs, to ſee the Product of our Soil periſh, and ſuch Commodities that could no more be ſpared from the Nations uſe,*

than Cloths and Bread can be ſpared from our Bodies.

When Mr. Greenhill *was a Commiſſioner of the Navy and ſet at the Board, he, according to his Office of Controling the Store-keepers Accompts, ſeem'd ſomething to ſtickle againſt having fourteen or fifting Thouſand Load of Timber ſtor'd up in one Yard, ſaying, That Five Thouſand Load was the utmoſt quantity which was at one time ſtored up in* Portſmouth *Yard, which is a Place of greater Buſineſs for fitting his Majeſty's Royal Navy than* Deptford *was, but one of the leading Commiſſioners reply'd, That* Store was no Sore, *whether he meant no Store to himſelf or the Crown, is not hard to define; but I am poſitive it was the worſt of Evils to the Publick, and to every Dealer in the Trade of Shipbuilding; indeed if our noble Proprietors had made the Advantage in vending their Timber, it would be ſomewhat more reaſonable; but they, I preſume, have been as much impoſed on by the Crafty Dealers as the Publick, ſince the Cuſtom has been for many Years in the Timber-Trade to ſell Five for Four from the Proprietors to the*

Merchant, and the Merchant has Sold to the Publick again but Four for Five, beſides the Price has been ſo very mean, and the Encouragement ſo very little that our noble Proprietors have had for their Timber, that it hath perfectly made them careleſs; nay, in a manner, they have reaſon to refuſe Cultivating, Pruning, or forwarding the Growth of Oak Timber, but on the other Hand, they may very well order the Grubing, and wholly Extirpating ſuch an Incumbrance that profits nothing, and Sow their Land with Grain that turns to a better Account. From ſuch Conſiderations, and many more, I ſhall proceed to ſet down 73 Memorandums, which I have impartially taken and enter'd in my particular Employment, as I was intruſted to Act by the proper Officers in his Majeſty's Ship Yard at Deptford; *I may ſay in the Nature of a Foreman, ſince good Converſion is a moſt difficult part of Ship-Building, by which Minutes may be ſeen a very pernicious defect ſomewhere, either in the Felling or Seaſoning of our Oaken Timber, the which evil if not timely prevented, (nay, from the very great Scarcity of uſeful Ship Timber,*

ber, I fear it is already too late) will be a leſſening, not only the strength of our Navy, but alſo to the Merchant Ships for Traffick aud Commerce, and that we muſt be beholding to Strangers, when they are willing to help the defect. Our Commerce with Sweden *being forbid, from whence we had the greateſt ſupply of Fir Timber, which often did in divers caſes on Ship Building in lue of Oak, and therefore the want will be undeniably more of Oak Timber, and the care requiſite to preſerve it ought to be equal to the Conſumption.*

This being realy my Inducement to Publiſh this Piece, which is verbatum True, as I ſhall Anſwer for it before the great God, and with a great deal of Veneration I remain

Gentlemen,

Your very humble Servant

R. Williamſon.

Mr. *Williamſon's*

MEMOIRS.

AUGUST the 10th, 1711. There was a piece of Oak Timber containing 4 Load 40 Foot, Saw'd by *John Lewis*, and when open'd it prov'd ſo abominable Rotten, that it was ſent to heat the Pitch, excepting 12 Foot of indifferent ſound Timber, there being a large and viſible defect in it at receiving near the middle of the piece.

Sometime before there was received one piece of Oak from Mr. *Philips*, and after meaſur'd in 5 Load 98 Foot; Mr. *Ridger* who was placed to try the Timber at the Receipt, acquainted the Builder of the ſame, who inſtead of Commending him, accoſts him with raſh reprimands, ſaying, *What do you deſign*

to

to ruin the Merchants, Who will ſend their Timber here if you bring up new (I had almoſt ſaid True) *Cuſtoms?* and in a very little time places another Man on that Service, and put Mr. *Ledger* to other Buſineſs.

Auguſt 1711. There was a piece of Elm Timber cut by *George Parſons*, Sawyer, containing 4 Load 40 Foot, deſigned for a Keel piece, but proved ſhaken from one end to the other, and fiting for no Service, the defects was very viſible before it was open'd.

Auguſt 1711. There were four large pieces of Elm Timber, cut in the *Brick-Cloſe*, one near 4 Load, the other 2 Load and a half each, received with large and viſible Defects, ſo very bad that the Builder order'd them out of ſight into the wet Dock, and partly cut for ſo trifling a Utenſil as a Wedge.

Auguſt 1711. There was a parcel of Timber received, which was ſo abominably decay'd, that the Builder gave Mr. *Ledger*, and my ſelf, preſſing Orders to cut, ſlice and conſume it for any uſe; and alſo to diſpatch our Conver-

ſion

on for he declar'd he abhor'd to ave it in his ſight.

Auguſt 1711. There was one piece f Oak Timber receiv'd of Mr. *Dibles*, ontaining 3 Load 30 Foot, and ſaw'd y *John Nunley*, and not above 30 oot of good Timber in it, the reſt as order'd to be burnt by the Buil- er.

Memorandum 8. There was a piece f Oak containing 42 Foot convert- d for a Land-tye, but the Builder eprimanded me for not uſing it for top Timber for the ſixth Rate, tho' he had all ſuch Timbers cut be- ore.

Memorandum 9. At ſevaral Times he Builder order'd me to adviſe with is Sons, in converting and adapting he Timber for its various uſes; ac- ordingly I did, but when I excuſed ny ſelf for being govern'd by their Orders, he would Reprimand me, aying, *My Sons are Fools, I truſt in ou for all matters of Converſions.*

Memorandum 10. The Builder receiv- ng a large piece of Oak very defective, nd it being ſawed by Mr. *William Roberts*,

Roberts, but when it was ſawed, an
the Builder ſee it prove Rotten he curs'
the Sawyer, and Swore he would diſ
charge him, for making the Timbe
rotten.

Memorandum 11. *Richard Hayes* ta
king in a large piece of Oak Timber
containing 4 Load 40 Foot, accordin
to my Office I lin'd it for three piece
of thick Stuff, but the Builder order'
it of again, and his Son *Ben* told me
His Father deſign'd it for a Knee of
Head. I reply'd, *Then half the piec*
will be waſted; he anſwer'd, *That*
matter'd not, it muſt be ſo.

Memorandum 12. One piece of Oa
containing 70 Foot, well Grown fo
a Harpen, but the defects was ſo ver
obvious, that a Perſon without Eye
might have condemn'd it as uſeleſs.

Memorandum 13. One piece of Tim
ber hewn for a lower Foot-hook, con
taining 60 Foot, with a viſible defect
and not 10 Foot of good Timber in it

Memorandum 14. One piece of Oa
containing 110 Foot, ſaw'd by *Wil*
liam Clayton for a faſhon piece, for
fourth Rate Ship, but when open'd i

wa

was fitting for little but the Fire, and the defect was viſible.

Memorandum 15. According to the Builder's Order, I look'd out an upper piece of Stem for a fourth Rate Ship then going to be built, and ſhewing it to the Builder, he found fault, and Swore I was an extravagant Fellow, and he would look out a piece himſelf, but his piece being 15 Foot biger, I modeſtly acquainted him of the difference; but he harſhly reply'd, *You are not to dictate to me in my Buſineſs, ſince this will make a noble piece.* But indeed I ſay, the piece was 15 *s.* dearer, and my piece would have made it as well as the other.

Memorandum 16. One piece of Oak cut by *William Hayes*, Sawyer, containing 130 Foot, viſibly defective, notwithſtanding it was ſaw'd, and trim'd by the Shipwrights at the Publick Expence, and after condemn'd as uſeleſs. And ſuch another piece order'd to be uſed for a Tranſum, containing 120 Foot by Mr. *Joſeph*, the Builder's Son, and it was ſaw'd by *Thomas Lewis* the 9th of *October* 1711.

Memorandum 17. After the Frame of the *Glouceſter*, a Fourth Rate, was ſided by the Sawyers, the Shipwrights were order'd to hew the ſaid Frame the other way; I acquainted *Benjamin Allen*, the Foreman, of it, ſince it was a prodigious Waſte, *It matters not*, ſays he, *for the Shipwrights have little to do.* Without conſidering that every Foot that was hewn off for Chips, was worth 3 *s. per* Foot, ſo that employing 40 Shipwrights on ſuch Service, there may be waſted 12 pounds a Day, and the waſte as Chips not worth 20 *s.* beſides the diſadvantages in cutting up other Timber for Choks.

Memorandum 18. And in the ſaid Builder's Time, 4 Inch Plank was thined to 3 Inches by the Shipwrights, to cover the *Colcheſter*'s bottom, a 50 Gun Ship.

Memorandum 19. That Mr. *Young* and Mr. *Ledger* were employ'd to Meaſure the Timber after Mr. *Humpherys*, and finding it over meaſured, gave the Account to the Builder; but *Humpherys* ſtill continued. At another Time when Mr. *Ledger* attended the Receipts of Timber

ber at the Crane, and would often hint to the Meaſurer *Humphreys* that the Timber was wrong meaſur'd, and at ſome times ſo far as 60 Foot in one Tree; but *Ledger* was ſoon removed from thence, and placed to hard Labour, and work at his Tools.

Memorandum 20. At another Time the Builder ſaid to me, *Pray do you be a good Husband now of the Fir Timber, ſince there is but little in the Yard, and I cannot tell when we ſhall have more ſerved into the Yard.*

Memorandum 21. One piece of Timber ſawed by *Ferdinando Wilde*, mark'd 66 Foot, but meaſured no more than 46 Foot, adapted for a middle Foothook for a 60 Gun Fourth Rate.

November the 10th, 1711. There was a piece of Oak Timber ſawed by *Richard Hayes*, mark'd 90 Foot, but Mr. *Ledger* and my ſelf meaſuring of it, found it but 74 Foot; and another piece of Oak mark'd 107 Foot, and try'd as aforeſaid, was found but 74 Foot.

November the 16th, 1711. There was one piece of Oak ſawed by *Samuel Hope*,

mark'd 66 Foot, and meaſured but 42 Foot.

November the 23d. There was one piece of Oak Timber ſent to be ſaw'd at *John Nunly*'s Saw-pit, containing 33 Foot, by the Maſter Builder's Order, but proved red and not any good Timber in it.

The Builder order'd me to lay the largeſt Timber as it came into the Yard, as near the Saw-pit as poſſible I could, which accordingly I did, believing it moſt proper and advantagious in ſaving a long removal when it came to be ſaw'd; but in a very little time after the ſaid Builder block'd up thoſe Saw-pits, ordering the Shipwrights to hew in them, ſo that when the large Timber came to be uſed, I was obliged to apply two Teems of Horſes, beſides Labourers, to move ſuch large Timber to remote Sawpits.

December the 18th, 1711. And near that time the Builder took a Veſſel Load of Timber into the King's Yard and meaſured it, and all at the Publick Expence, before it was bought or contracted for.

January the 17th, 1711-12. *John Smith* saw'd a piece of Oak Timber, which was mark'd 100 Foot, but it measured no more than 75 Foot, and so very defective, that it would not make a Floor-rider for the *William and Mary* Yacht.

January the 18th, 1711-12. *William Clayton* saw'd a piece of Oak Timber containing 110 Foot, which was so visibly and wretchedly defective, that it would not make a Breast hook as it was designed for, or any other part of a Ship, and the defects so obvious, that any one might have discover'd them almost without Eyes.

January the 19th, 1711-12. There was a piece of Oak saw'd by *John Nunly*, containing 52 Foot, and being saw'd into Ledges, proved so very rotten, that it was condemn'd by *Robert Edge*.

January the 25th. One piece of Oak saw'd by *George Reeves*, containing 60 Foot, over-measured 10 Foot, and when saw'd for 5 Inches Stuff, there was not above 15 Foot fitting for Service.

January the 26th, 1711-12. There was one piece of Oak Timber, saw'd

by *Thomas Williams*, containing 10[illegible] Foot, being ſaw'd for Cheeks of Maſts, it proved ſo defective that there was not 20 Foot of good Timber in it, and the defects were very viſible when it was received.

January the 28th 1711-12. There was one piece of Oak Timber ſaw'd by *Rice Davis*, containing 60 Foot, and not above 15 Foot of good Timber in it, and the defects very obvious at receiving. The ſame day there was a piece of Oak ſaw'd by *John Lewis*, containing 27 Foot, it was defective by a Red Rot, and not 6 Foot of good Timber in it, being ſent by the Builder, only there was an Abatement made of 4 Foot.

February the 1ſt. 1711-12. One piece ſaw'd by *Oliver Edwards* of 126 Foot, and 20 Foot over-meaſured, not more than 40 Foot of ſound Timber in the piece, the defect being a Soft, Red, Rotten, and a great Hole viſible at the Receipt.

February the 1ſt, 1711-12. *William Clayton* ſaw'd a piece of Oak containing 72 Foot, and not above 45 Foot ſound, and altho' the piece was well [illegible]

ew'd by the Officer, and visibly de-ctive, the Builder's Expression was, *hat it would make him a noble piece*; and o receives it without any Abatement.

February the 2d. 1711-12. *William oberts* sawed a piece of Oak contain-g 70 Foot, and not 15 Foot of good imber in it, and defects visible at the ceiving, and no Abatements made on .

February the 9th, 1711-12. *William layton* saw'd a piece of Oak for a Hag-oats Tiller, containing 30 Foot, and ver-measured 2 Foot.

At the same time the Builder or-er'd me to help *Stephen Ledge* and *Ri-bard Hayes* to the best of Work, and *ohn Nunly*, *George Parsons* and *William oberts* to the worst sort, altho' *Nunly* ad a large Family and but mean, Re-lecting on me as if some of the last nention'd were my Favourites, altho' he ad formerly order'd me to help *George Parsons* to the profitablest Work, and fter reprimanded me for obeying it; hinted the case to *Parsons*, he reply'd, *He could not spare the Builder a Present at that time, since the necessity of his Fa-mily call'd for Assistance*; and he well knew

knew that the Builder had took no ice of the Advantages he had lately made, and the Anger proceeded from miſſing a ſhare in the Profit.

February the 15th, 1711-12. *Ferdinando Wilde* ſaw'd a piece of Oak containing 71 Foot, which was wretchedly ſhaken, and not above 30 Foot of good Timber in it, the other part fit for no uſe, and the defects viſible.

The ſame Day, one piece of Oak was ſaw'd by *John Lewis*, containing 73 Foot very much ſhaken, and not 30 Foot of ſound Timber in it, and viſible at the receipt.

February the 26th, 1711-12. One piece of Oak ſaw'd by *John Lewis* containing 88 Foot, and when open'd not fiting for uſe, the defects were viſible at coming in, and received by *Benjamin Allen* the Builder's Son.

February the 27th. One piece of Oak ſaw'd by *Ferdinando Wilde* for thick ſtuff, containing 142 Foot with viſible defects, and ſaw'd by the Builder's Order, and when open'd there was not 50 Foot of good Timber in it.

Another piece of Oak ſaw'd by *Ferdinando Wilde*, I lined it exactly to the

ſcantling

ſcantling for thick ſtuff according to the various uſe, but the Builder taking notice of it, reprimanded me, ſaying, *What makes you Line the Timber exactly, I will have it left thicker than the uſe, and then I can hew it away with the Ax-men.* Obeying his Orders, it cauſed the Labour of five Men one day at 2 *s.* 1 *d. per* day on each piece when the ſaid pieces came to be uſed.

March the 4th, 1711-12. One piece of Oak ſaw'd by *John Nunly* containing 76 Foot, ſo abominably ſhaken, that it was fitting for no uſe.

March the 5th. The Builder receivd one piece of Oak containing 27 Foot, which was not fitting for any Service, ſaw'd by *Oliver Edwards.*

One piece of Oak containing 240 Foot, over-meaſured 26 Foot, the Builder order'd it for one pair of Cheeks for a Maſt, and ſo run one middle cut through him. *March* the 4th 1711-12.

March the 6th, there was ſaw'd by *Tilbury Strange*, one piece of Oak containing 86 Foot, for a half Beam, but being ſo very defective, it was after cut to ſo mean a part as a Ledg, and not above half uſeful.

March the 7th, 1711-12. *John Nunly* saw'd one piece of Oak containing 70 Foot for two 9 Inch Knees, and the defects very visible, so that there was not 10 Foot of good Timber in the whole piece.

March the 8th. *William Clayton* saw'd one piece of Oak by the Builder's Order, containing 68 Foot, and not fiting for any use.

March the 11. One piece of Oak cut by *William Roberts* containing 28 Foot, the Builder order'd a middle cut to be run through it, and it was red and shaken and good for nothing.

The same Day there was a piece of Oak sent from the receipt by the Builder's Order containing 30 Foot, and being cut for a Carling, there was not 10 Foot of good Timber in it.

The same Day *George Parsons* saw'd a piece of Oak to 5 inch Stuff for Ledges, the contents were 68 Foot, and not above 20 Foot of sound Timber in it, the other was ordered by the Clark of the Check to heat the Pitch.

Note, That at cutting a Fourth Rate's Gun Deck-beams in this Yard and near this Time, there was in some

ſome 2 Foot, in others 3 Foot, and 4 Foot, cut off from the length of thoſe Beams of very ſound Timber, to fit them to their places, and thoſe ends made waſte.

March the 14th. One piece of Oak was order'd to *Ferdinando Wilde*, containing 140 Foot, and ſided to 15 Inches, deſigned for a riſing Timber, but it was ſo miſerably defective, that not above 40 was fitting for uſe ordered by the Builder, it being Merchant *Philips*'s Timber.

March the 14th. Mr. *Quallet* told me, That when he was an Overſeer for the King's Ships in the Merchant's Yard, one Mr. *Martin*, a Timber Merchant, furniſh'd the ſaid Yard with Timber; *Quallet*, as his Duty was, objected againſt the bad; *Martin* being moved, upbraided *Quallet* with bringing no more Timber to that Place, unleſs *Quallet* would receive it without ſo much Searching, for ſays *Martin*, *I will ſend it to the Queen's Yard, where I can have it received.*

The ſaime Day, *Rice Davis* ſaw'd a piece of Oak for a long Timber, which contained 84 Foot, and not 50 Foot of

ſound Timber in it, the defects being viſible.

March the 15th. *John Lewis* ſaw'd a piece of Oak containing 45 Foot, and not 15 Foot of ſound Timber in it.

The ſame Day *William Clayton* ſaw'd a piece of Oak containing 59 Foot, with viſible defects at the Receipts, it was converted for Ledges, and one ſmall Knee, which might be 19 Foot in all, the other part was good for little.

One piece of Oak ſaw'd by *John Nunly*, containing 85 Foot with a viſible defect, ſo that there was not more than 35 Foot of ſound Timber in the whole.

One piece of Oak containing 100 Foot, ſaw'd by *John Smith* for two Breſthooks, and one Knee, but it was viſibly defective, with rotten holes and very ſhaken, very obvious at the Receipt, and not above 30 Foot of ſound Timber, being received by the Builder.

March the 18th. *Rice Davis* ſaw'd one piece of Oak, containing 48 Foot, there was a middle cut to make two Knees, but it proved good for nothing but the Fire.

March

March the 19th. One piece of Oak
'd by *John Lewis*, containing 20
ot, it being red and ſhaken, and fit-
for nothing but the Fire.
March 21ſt. One piece of Oak re-
ved, and a middle cut run through it
Samuel Hope, but the defects ſo viſi-
at the receiving, that it was fit
nothing but Blocks to ſet Ships on.
March 22d. Saw'd by *John Smith*,
piece of Oak for Ledges contain-
58 Foot, and not above 18 Foot
ſound Timber in it.
March the 24th. *Richard Hayes* ſaw'd
piece of Oak containing 57 Foot,
ng an old Sap rotten decay'd piece,
rotten holes at the Receipt, and
above 20 Foot of ſound Timber in
being over-meaſured near 27 Foot.
March the 26th. *Thomas Williams*
'd one piece of Oak containing 184
ot for two Tranſums, but when it
open'd it was condemn'd as uſe-
by the Builder, it being ſhaken and
ggy.
March 27th. 1712. *Thomas Williams*
'd one piece of Oak for a Rider,
taining 132 Foot, but when it was
n'd it was ſo rotten that it was fit

for

for nothing, received by the Bui
der.

The ſame Day, *Ferdinando Wil*
ſaw'd one piece of Oak containing 4
Foot, not fit for any uſe being red an
ſhaken.

March 4th. *William Clayton* ſaw'
one piece of Oak for two Tranſums an
a Foot-hook, but it was fit for nothin
but Blocks, being much ſhaken, and on
great rotten hole, the piece containin
106 Foot, but there was not 20 Foo
of ſound Timber in it.

July the 11th 1713. One piece o
Oak for a Foot-hook lin'd by M
Ledger and my ſelf, the waſte was larg
and very conſiderable, upon which w
was going to line it to 5 Inch ſtuff, bu
one of the Builder's Sons countermande
it, ſaying, It was his Father's Orde
to ſend all the Waſte to *Old Cannon*
Yard, which afterward proved to b
ſent there for Chips for their Servant

July the 29th 1713. One piece o
Oak ſaw'd by *Rice Davis*, containin
64 Foot, over-meaſured 10 Foot.

Near *Auguſt* the 1ſt, 1713. *Thom*
Williams ſaw'd one piece of Oak con
taining 85 Foot, over-meaſured 7 Foo
an

not 20 Foot of ſound Timber in

Auguſt the 7th 1713. One piece of
k ſaw'd at *George Reeves*'s Pitt for a
Timber, and another laid by the
t of 11 Foot long, and over-mea-
'd 10 Foot, which was the piece I
ntioned in my Caſe, publiſh'd ſome
e ago, and Sold by *J. Roberts* near
Oxford-Arms in *Warwick-lane*.

Auguſt the 8th 1713. There was one
ce of Oak laid on the Pile by Old
anon's Yard, containing 70 Foot,
er-meaſur'd 17 Foot.

I will mention one *Memorandum*
Mr. *Sutherland*'s, which I had from
n; he obſerv'd, that in *February* 17$\frac{11}{12}$.
e of each Foremens Servants hew'd
piece of Oak containing 105 Foot
r a half Beam for a 50 Gun Man
War, the piece containing the ſub-
nce, that it would have made a
oor-rider for an 80 Gun Man of
ar, ſince the Chips that was hew'd
f from the butt end, the moulding
iſe was between 6, 7 and 8 Inches
rough, there could not poſſibly be
ore Timber in it when it was con-
verted

verted than 20 Foot, ſo that fo
Parts in five was waſted.

Theſe *Memorandums* were made b
Intervals in leſs than two Years, a
had Opportunities and Memory to ta
them, and indeed there was ſcarce
Day paſt but ſomething worth N
tice came to my view; nay, theſe a
but Trifles of the ſmalleſt degree, fin
all theſe *Memorandums* were taken aft
the Yard was clear'd of ſuch mount
neous heaps of defective Timber,
was cut up in 1709 and 1710;
thoſe Years there was ſuch an ab
minable Conſumption of defective Ti
ber, that grieved me as well as dive
others to behold, there being ſcar
one Day in two Years but that a gre
quantity of ſtately large Timber piec
were croſs cut into 10, 12 or 14 I
ches lengths from the butt, and fittin
for nothing but Chips; ſo that aft
3, 4, 5, or more lengths have be
cut off, as red and rotten as it coul
poſſibly be, the rude knotty top pa
has been cut up for ſome ſmall pet
Uſes, and not to mention the char
of Horſes, Labourers and Sawyers, t
greateſt part of the whole was ſerv

ſo, which in leſs than ſeven Years was ſound, ſerviceable and uſeful Ship-Timber. I was really ſometimes at a ſtand, Whether I was ſafe to act in ſuch an Employ, who muſt be oblig'd to ſee ſuch an abominable waſte, and ſo viſible and moſt barbarous Abuſes in the managing of our *Engliſh* Oak Timber? And would often conſult an intimate Acquaintance, what his Opinion was of my moſt intricate Station; nay, he knows very well that I have often been almoſt reſolute in gaining my Diſcharge, and quitting his Majeſty's Service, rather than be oblig'd to act or have the leaſt hand in ſuch a ſhameful, and I am really perſwaded, a moſt wicked Employment.

Moſt other Countries make the Publick Advantage preferable to any private Intereſt whatſoever, eſpecially the *Dutch*, who are very rigorous with thoſe they find defrauding the Publick; and *Tully*, and all the *Heathen* Philoſophers, in their Morals, prefer the Tranquility of the Common-wealth before the Intereſt of the neareſt Alliance; and I am very poſitive nothing can hurt us more than the want of *Engliſh* Oak

Timber. But to proceed, I ſay what principally induced me to keep the aforeſaid *Memorandums*, was for two Reaſons; the Firſt, that of finding my ſelf very much abus'd, for endeavouring to put every piece of Timber to the moſt proper uſe, for the good of the Publick, as I have, in ſome meaſure, ſet down in my Caſe, Sold by *J. Roberts* as aforeſaid; but what moſt materially put me upon it was, that finding ſuch large quantities of *Engliſh* Timber receiv'd into his Majeſty's Yard, neither Meaſure nor Sound, and that ſo little Work was done with ſuch an abominable and prodigious Expence of Timber, that I could not perſwade my ſelf, but at one time or other, it would be examin'd into, by ſuch as have good Salaries to inſpect that Management, and by over haling the very chargeable Eſtimates and Progreſſes of the Officers, they would find the Abuſe, and viſibly ſee, that with good Oeconemy, half the Timber that was expended, would ſuffice to do the Work that was done in the ſaid Yard with double the Sum; however, finding ſuch needful Examinations neglected, tho' very much

wanted,

wanted, and even when they have been fully detected and preſented elſewhere. I ſhall proceed a little further to make more publick, and acquaint the World how they are ſerv'd.

My ſmall, but very neceſſary, Reflections on this ſhameful Management, begot me the moſt violent hatred from the Capital Officers, and at length amounted to a Diſcharge; but to go a little back and ſhew how it was contriv'd. My Servant's Time being expir'd, I accordingly applied my ſelf to Mr. *Stacy* for another, but he ſtill put me off with one blind Excuſe or another, until he had finiſh'd his Deſign; ſometime after I was diſcharg'd, there was an Order to diſcharge eighty Shipwrights; and according to the Cuſtom of the Navy, ſuch Men are immediately paid all their Wages, ſo I deſir'd my Brother *French* to Petition the Navy Board for to grant me the Favour of having my Money paid amongſt thoſe Men, but it was deny'd on account they had no Preſident for the Thing, altho' *Nicholas Felton* dying before the time, had his Money paid him among thoſe Men; by which any Perſon may

ſee when Preſidents are to be made, and when not to be allowed.

Upon my being diſcharg'd an Anonimous Letter was ſent to the Admiralty, ſetting forth ſeveral Abuſes tranſacted in the ſaid Yard, and altho' I had no concern in the Navy, I was, amongſt others, requir'd to attend, and being call'd in before the Lords of the Admiralty, where ſat Sir *George Bing*, Sir *John Jennings*, and Sir *Charles Turner*, with Eſquire *Burchet*, the Secretary; the Letter being read, I found it in a very handſome Character and Style, ſetting forth ſeveral notorious Abuſes committed by Mr. *Stacy*, our Builder, and moſt of them very true; how the other Men govern'd themſelves in anſwering the Examination I cannot ſay, but for my part I allowed of every Article that was true, and would have given my Depoſition on the ſame had it been deſir'd; and let the World cenſure who they pleaſe for the Scribe, I do declare, as I ſhall one Day anſwer for it, I know nothing of it, either directly or indirectly, not having any Hand in Writing the Letter my ſelf, or knowing any Perſon that was

in

the leaſt manner concern'd in it; and deed by the Puniſhment inflicted, it ay be more properly allow'd, that it as drawn up amongſt themſelves, on rpoſe to miſchief ſome other Per-ns, and give themſelves a handle to jure ſuch as ſtood in their way; Sir *eorge Bing* principally examining the cts, the managing of the *Goſpert* and *liſbury* being moſt Material, which ctions I being directly plac'd on, I nkly gave them a particular Account, d ſince the Law has provided Puniſh-ents ſuitable to the Crimes, and that poor Labouring Man ſhall be hang'd r taking a Chip, who is ſtrug-g to maintain a large Family on irteen Pence a Day, and then to ſee *cy* come off without Puniſhment for ch notorious Miſapplication as was en fairly proved againſt him, is, I , no defect in the Law, but — To oceed, ſays Sir *George Bing*, *What is r Opinion?* (ſpeaking of a new Dock ely made at *Deptford*) *Whether it d been better continued a Launch o de a Dock?* I anſwer'd, *That in my inion it might have been as well let ne. Why*, ſays Sir *George*, *was you*

ever at Portſmouth? *Yes*, ſaid I, *but there is a vaſt difference between* Portſmouth *and* Deptford, *ſince the former is a Salt Water, that is clear and has but little* Settlings, *and the latter little better than Puddle Water, which will beget a great gathering, and conſequently embarraſs the opening and ſhutting the Gate, and cauſe a great Expence.* But I find I might as well have held my Tongue. *Since* Stacy *ever had his own luck*, ſays *Martin, the greater the Knave the better his Fortune* And this puts me in mind of a Paſſage acted by *Stacy* when he was Maſter Builder in *Ireland*; his Foreman, for ſome Reaſon, writ againſt him, and acquainted the Navy Board ſo far, that it was almoſt upon an even Ballance, whether he ſhould be diſplac'd from the Queen's Service, but he having a Friend, not only prevented the Diſmiſs but acquainted *Stacy* with the ſame, and of the Perſon that gave them the light. And in a little time *Stacy* writ to the Board, acquainting them, That he could do the Buſineſs without a Foreman, and deſir'd he might be diſcharg'd, and according it was granted him; by which

ay plainly ſee, that the honeſt Per-
n muſt be the Knave, and the Knave
e honeſt Man. I deſir'd of the Board
be heard, to know for what I was
t out of the Service, ſince I believed
y Evidence would be more material
efore diſcharg'd; however it was de-
y'd me, Sir *George* ſaying, *I might go to*
e Navy Board. I have in another
lace, mention'd once or twice in
eſe Memoirs, ſet forth *Miles* the
oreman of the Float-work in this
id Yard, to be a diſaffected Perſon, and
eing willing to make out what I had
rit, made a further Enquiry of his
ehaviour at *Woolwich*, and found it
here too to agree with my printed Re-
ort; finding alſo *John Barrum*, *Samuel*
ohnſon and *Thomas Barker* had been
ormer Evidences againſt ſeveral Per-
ons that were diſaffected to his Ma-
eſty, I gain'd a Summons from the
Worſhipful Juſtice *Lewin*, (who lives
at *Lea* in *Kent*) to warn the ſaid Per-
ons on the 8th of *January* 1716-17.
before the Petty Seſſions at *Black-heath*,
t being the Day appointed for that
urpoſe, and on my appearing in *Wool-*
wich Yard, and asking the proper Of-
ficer's

ficer's Leave for the ſaid Perſons abſen
they were willing to go with m
in order to acquaint the Juſtices of t
Truth concerning *Miles* and one *H*
trope, who both ſerved an Apprenticeſh
to the preſent Surveyor of his Majeſt
Navy; but when we came to appe
at the Bench, I found I had made t
great an Alarm, ſince *Smith* the Sto
keeper at *Woolwich* was come fro
thence and ſitting amongſt the Juſtic
and altho' theſe honeſt Men had be
divers times very uſeful in detecting
ſuch ill Perſons, they were a little ſu
priſed to ſee their Officer ſo near t
Magiſtrates, and indeed it at firſt cauſe
a heſitation in the Men, and if I m
frankly give my Opinion it look'd litt
better than awing his Majeſty's Ev
dences; however the Men took
much Courage to Speak, that the who
number of Juſtices allowed them to
honeſt and good Men, and hearty
the preſent Government; and at t
ſequel of the Examination, Sir *Snelin*
Thomas, Knt. and a Juſtice of Peac
with lifted up Hands declared, *If*
was either Commiſſioner of the Ad
miralty or the Navy, he would gi
bo

oth his Hands that such a Person ould be discharg'd. For he allow'd *Mills* to be a very ill Person, and yet here was no Notice taken of the same, ut the said *Mills* seem'd to bid defiance to any Person that should offer o appear against him, Saying, *They ave done their worst by me, and I matter it not.* So finding all my Pains and Trouble to mark out such as were disaffected to his present Royal Majesty's Succession, (to be all continued in his Service by thrusting out other Men) s retorted on me as pick and prejudice, because the Persons are too nearly allied to the principal Managers, I shall therefore pass on to acquaint the World how they manage the Royal Navy; in order thereunto, I shall draw some useful Parallels between the Management of the private Ship-builders Yards where I have been employ'd, and am now concern'd; I say in such Places if they contract for one, two, three, or four Ships to build, besides, perhaps as many more to Repair, they will not have scarce one Stick of Timber laid up to perish, but will have fresh, sound, serviceable, and most useful Timber

brought them, full as fast as they can work it, let the Emergency be ever so great; whereas in his Majesty's Yards they believe they are ruin'd, and must inevitably suffer, if they have not 6 or 7 Thousand Load of Timber heap'd up as store, to cull for useful Timber to build one small Ship, and perhaps not find all the pieces that belongs to the said Composition, so that the use Money of the Sum to purchase such a quantity of Timber, with good Maniagement, would build the said Ship. There is no Clerk of the Check at 200*l.* Salary *per Annum*, with four Clerks at 120 *l.* more to measure a little Timber, and keep an Account of Men's Time. Neithe is there a Store-keeper at 200 *l.* Salary, with five Clerks more at 150 *l.* with prehaps 20 or 30 Labourers at 13 *d. per* Day, to pack up and sort a few Nails and a little old Lead, and the like; or a Clerk of the Survey at 200 *l. per Annum*, with three Clerks at 90 *l.* more to assist the Master Builder and his Assistant, who has 300 *l. per Annum*, to inspect into the goodness of the Timber, and the Master of Attendance who has 200 *l.*

per

per Annum to inſpect into the goodneſs of a little Rope; I ſay, in the Merchant's Yards where they have full as much Buſineſs, there is none to aſſiſt the Builders but a Foreman, at 50 *l.* *per Annum*, and its very rare to ſee any rotten Timber receiv'd there; nay, the Dealers will not preſume to offer any Goods that have the leaſt ſuſpicion of Defect, for I have ſeen in the Smith's Affairs, as well as in other Tradeſmen, that they do not covet the turn of the Scale, as it's term'd, but are really moſt exact and fair dealing Men, and why ſuch a vaſt difference ſhould be in the publick Affairs, I believe may be a Parodox to many, and therefore I ſhall endeavour to explain it as follows: I have heard it very well reported, that before any new Dealer can ſerve any Goods into his Majeſty's Yard at *Deptford*, it will coſt him 40 *l.* for his Acquaintance amongſt the Officers and the Clerks, firſt the Purveyer muſt view the Timber and make his Report to the Commiſſioners of its uſefulneſs; according to which Report a Contract is drawn, then when the Timber is arrived at the Yard in

Foreman, to the Keys, where the Timber is brought for Sale, and there will make choice of as much uſeful Timber as his Service requires, and perhaps will ſet a diſtinguiſhing mark on it, and then the Merchant will ſend that quantity of Timber in courſe, and in ſuch an exact order, that as it is taken on Shore at the Builder's place, (which to be ſure is no larger than what is requiſite) it is undeniably drawn to the Sawpits, and from thence to the Ship, without any manner of expence in Labourers to Pile and Unpile it, or charging himſelf with three or four Teams, of Horſes at 100 *per Annum* each Team to draw his Timber from Place to Place, and at the receiving there is little to do more than viewing it by himſelf, or his Foreman, who will take an Account of the Quantity; as to the Quality, it will not admit any diſpute at the receipt, ſince that is well and exactly view'd before ever it was tranſported; beſides, there is no manner of room for Tricking in either Buyer or Seller, one ſeeing his Goods to be what he would have, and the other knowing his Money to be ſure and ready

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on the delivery of the Goods, or perhaps at furtheſt in ſix Months after, ſo that there is no deſign on either ſide, but a fair way of proceeding with all the diſpatch as poſſible can be made, there are none to be brib'd or ſolicited to do his Duty, but every Man exerts his Faculty for the Advantage of the Work; I ſay, in the ſaid Yards a Ship of Eight hundred Tuns can be compleatly built in 6 or 7 Months with a hundred Shipwrights, and no Stock of Timber to begin with, but ſerved in as it's wrought, and put inſtantly to the uſe. Theſe Caſes are what principally cauſes the different Expence in Building the Royal Navy, and in Building of Ships for the private Service, and not the Defect or Idleneſs of the Labouring Men, as they would endeavour to Inſinuate, and that the Cauſe why his Majeſty's Yards, cannot be ſupply'd with uſeful Timber as ready as the Merchants, is by reaſon of the alteration in the Meaſuring, and that his Majeſty's Managers will not receive the Timber as my former Caſe ſets forth, That and only That, and what I have here mention'd is the very Cauſe. Not-

notwithstanding such Misapplicatio
is very pernicious, not only to the Pu
lick, but also to such Persons as a
counted busy Fellows; for in begg
Reflections on the publick Credit,
if they was oblig'd to receive th
very refuse of such Commodities,
account that the Merchants are oblig
to forbear their Money for some Yea
and on account of Credit the Pu
chaser must bear the loss; which
doubt not, if well inspected, will a
pear directly otherwise; and that
Materials made use of to build and
build his Majesty's Royal Navy,
be furnish'd at much better Ra
for a considerable less Sum of Mon
per Annum, than has been usual
with prompt Payments, and the
cash Allowances much less than it
was, which, I make no doubt,
be fully prov'd in a very little tim

FINIS.